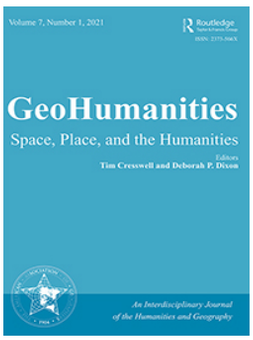

GeoHumanities

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rgeo20

Family Debilitation: Migrant Child Detention and the Aesthetic Regime of Neoliberal Authoritarianism

Claire Blencowe

To cite this article: Claire Blencowe (2021): Family Debilitation: Migrant Child Detention and the Aesthetic Regime of Neoliberal Authoritarianism, GeoHumanities, DOI: 10.1080/2373566X.2021.1981770

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2021.1981770

Published online: 01 Nov 2021.

SPACES & POLITICS OF AESTHETICS FORUM

Family Debilitation: Migrant Child Detention and the Aesthetic Regime of Neoliberal Authoritarianism

Claire Blencowe
University of Warwick, UK

This paper proposes the term "family debilitation" to point to the ways that institutionalized child abuse operates to perversely generate biopolitical authority, a strategy of negative biopolitics that is integral to the aesthetic regimes of settler colonialism and neoliberal authoritarianism. The paper attends to two scenes of child detention in the US: **Scene 1 US/Mexico Border 2017** concerns migrant children caught up in the bordering regimes of Donald Trump's America; **Scene 2 Pennsylvania 1879** concerns indigenous children caught up in the disciplinary regimes of "civilizing" education. As we attend to the connections between these scenes an argument emerges that situates racialized child detention and abuse within the aesthetic technologies biopolitical sovereignty. The "problem" to which these practices serve as a kind of technical answer is not any kind of problem with migrant and indigenous families themselves but rather is a problem of government —specifically the legitimacy deficit that exists where biopolitical states openly participate in dispossession and the destruction of life. **Key Words: biopolitics, debilitation, family separation, neoliberal authoritarianism, settler colonial sovereignty.**

"Families belong together!" has become one of the most important slogans of contemporary protest. In this age of migration the power to choose to live with family members is a defining axis of inequality. Contemporary border regimes are imposed through the violent control of intimacy (d'Aoust 2013; Fassin 2010; Torres 2018; Turner 2020). Policies that involve the detention of migrant children are a harrowing marker of the cruelty of these regimes. They are also highly spectacular, generating images, protest and attention—shaping experience and investing affect. They echo and reverberate in the anti-immigrant politics of neoliberal authoritarian governments around the world, but also throughout the resonating memories of stolen generations, child detention, family separation and pathologization in the ongoing history of racial capitalism, colonialism and its genocidal "civilizing" missions (Smith et al. 2019, NAISA 2018; Luiselli 2020).

GeoHumanities, 00(00) 2021, 1–26
Initial submission, May 2020; revised submissions, March and August 2021; final acceptance, August 2021.
Published by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This paper takes up two specific scenes from the long history of family separation and child-detention in the United States with the ambition of making more apparent some of the technologies of power that underlie and drive this politics: **Scene 1 US/Mexico Border 2017** concerns the migrant children caught up in the bordering regimes of Donald Trump's America; **Scene 2 Pennsylvania 1879** concerns the indigenous children who have so long been caught up in forms of child detention and family separation through practices of "civilizing" education. As we attend to the connections between these scenes an argument emerges that situates racialized child detention and abuse within the aesthetic technologies of settler colonial and neoliberal government. The "problem" to which these practices serve as a kind of technical answer is not any kind of problem with migrant and indigenous families themselves but rather is a problem of government—specifically the legitimacy deficit that exists where biopolitical states openly participate in dispossession and the destruction of life. Child detention, family separation and the systematic abuse of racialized children can be understood, I want to suggest, as a performative strategy of "negative biopolitics" called upon by governments in an attempt secure authority. Central to deciphering this technology is recognition of the relation between biopolitical authority, the normative family, debilitation, and the civilizational-cultural metaphysics of race.

The paper contributes to the analysis of the aesthetic regime of neoliberal authoritarianism. With the term "aesthetic regime" I intend those more or less conscious tactics and technologies that shape structures of experience—placing limits on possibility—that are associated with specific politico-economic agendas; what we might call, following Foucault, the "political unconscious" (see Blencowe 2012). Tactics and technologies that aim to capture the political unconscious succeed most fully where they are able to disappear, in the sense of becoming the obvious, unconscious, parameters of critique as well as consensus. My work sits alongside other feminist/queer and Foucauldian theorists who identify biological reason—biopolitics or biomentality—as key in deciphering the structures of experience that define our present. Biopolitical racism and race, here, is not only the organization of financial hierarchies and vulnerability but is also a *material metaphysics*, distributing the meaning, order and value of life, which is always also the control of ecologies and land (Carter 2019; Morgensen 2011; Osuri 2017; Weheliye 2014; Wynter 1995, 2003).

Puar (2017) has made an important intervention at the intersection of biopolitical theory and settler colonial studies to argue that practices of debilitation are central to the production of settler colonial sovereignty. Her work addresses the limitations of biopolitical theory in terms of its failures to grasp the specificity and significance of colonialism as the paramount context of modern race politics (see also Couze 2009; Mbembé 2003; Medovoi 2012; Morgensen 2011; Stoler 2010; Weheliye 2014). Focusing on Israel/Palestine, Puar argues that if it is to grasp the realities of settler colonialism biopolitical theory needs to move beyond thinking of biopower as hinging upon the question of who is made to live and who to die, to also engage with ways in which racialized groups are made to live attenuated, debilitated, lives. Building on critical disability studies, she highlights aspects of the violence of occupation that result in long term physical and psychological injury for Palestinians, especially the young—from "shoot to maim" military tactics, to infrastructural violence that supresses nutrition and health care (see also Medien 2018; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2019). The Israeli state, Puar argues, derives crucial ideological heft, a kind of humanitarian capital, as well as technological knowledge and profit, from these debilitated lives, at the same time as seeking to render impotent future resistance

—"debilitating generational time" (Puar 2017, 152; Medien and Puar 2018). Commenting on the relevance of her argument for settler colonial studies, Puar states that "understanding the role of maiming not only in Palestine but also in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States puts analytic pressure on the assumption that the goal of settler colonialism is necessarily elimination" (Puar 2017, 143. cf Wolfe 2006). Her arguments resonate with Simpson and other indigenous scholars who highlight the role of fantasies of indigenous people as flawed and wounded in the ongoing production of settler colonial sovereignty in North America, as well as the intimacy of dispossessive violence to supposed sites of "care" (Byrd et al. 2018; Daigle 2019; Simpson 2017; Tamez 2016; Tuck 2009).

In this paper I take up Puar's provocation to further explore the role of debilitation in the production of settler colonial sovereignty and biopolitical authority. I propose the term "family debilitation" to point to instances of structural violence that target the capacities not of individual bodies so much as relational bodies—families, communities, nations. These technologies perversely generate biopolitical authority and bolster state claims to sovereignty. This works not by eliminating indigenous and other migrant populations so much as by working to inscribe an aesthetic regime wherein indigenous and migrant lives are made to appear, and keep on appearing, as incompetent and dangerous, their presence (along with that of other groups racialized as threat) justifying an ever-intensifying investment in security and control. That aesthetic regime drives desire and acceptance for authoritarian rule and state violence in the contemporary United States. As will be elaborated upon below, I refer to that contemporary drive to state violence as "neoliberal authoritarianism."

Further, with the term "*family* debilitation" I aim to situate these violent state practices that take family relations as their target within the specific genealogy of the neoliberal project, drawing a connection to the ways in which neoliberalism centers upon the family as the principal site of value, and upon civilization as the object of morality.

Whilst Neoliberalism is a problematic and overused term (Larner 2003), for the purposes of this paper I am defining it quite specifically in reference to the political ideology that has been articulated and promoted by the Mont Pelerin Society—an organization founded in 1947 by Fredrick Hayek and Milton Friedman that has been central to the promotion of neoliberal theory amongst governments globally. Whilst this discourse has often presented itself as a kind of pure economic logic that is free from moral bias, such claims should be read as an ideological attempt on the part of this particular moral and political aesthetic to present itself as universal—as inescapable pure logic—to lay claim to the political unconscious. I am drawing on a tradition of post-Foucauldian/post-Marxist feminist cultural political economy which lays bare the fallacy of such claims and attends to the theological and cultural dimensions of neoliberalism (for example Adkins 2018; Brown 2006; Cooper 2017, 2011; Federici 2014; Gibson-Graham 1997; Whyte 2019). In particular I draw upon Cooper and Whyte whose recent works illuminate ways that neoliberal economic policy depends upon moralizing agendas—especially around the restoration of the "traditional" family and the protection of "western civilization." Drawing this together with indigenous scholarship on civilizational education, especially Simpson (2017) and Lomawaima (1999, 2002), as well as queer/feminist biopolitical theories of settler colonialism (Byrd et al. 2018; Jacobs 2009; Morgensen 2011; Osuri 2017; Puar 2017; Schuller 2018; Stoler 2010; Wynter 1995), I seek to highlight how such moralizing agendas are tied to, and dependent upon, practices of family debilitation. Through this, I also want to suggest that these contemporary debilitating practices of neoliberal authoritarianism are

a continuation and renewal of colonial biopolitical technologies—especially associated with the "civilizing mission" and the idea of cultural salvation as the basis of sovereignty.

As a contribution to biopolitical theory, this paper situates child detention and other technologies of family debilitation as a part of the constructivist cultural/religious civilizational version of biopolitics and biopolitical racism (see also Blencowe 2012; Feldman and Medovoi 2016; Goldberg 2016; Mbembe 2017; Medovoi 2012; Schuller 2018). Residential Indian schools and other sites of civilizing education can, I argue, be understood as a part of an ostensibly humanitarian "biopolitical turn" of nineteenth century North American and British colonialism, that hinged upon this civilizational version of the metaphysics of race (see also Schuller 2018). In the violence inflicted upon family relations and children through border regimes today we see a continuation and renewal of these technologies and this metaphysics. Family debilitation and the civilizational metaphysics of race is as central to the aesthetic regimes of neoliberal authoritarianism, as it is to the intersecting regime of settler colonialism.

NEOLIBERAL AUTHORITARIANISM

By "neoliberal authoritarianism" I mean the tendency toward ratchetting up explicitly violent and racializing controls on migration and militarizing policing, at the same time as seeking to define and control national culture, that is seemingly inherent in neoliberal political economy.

Gonzales argues that contemporary policies toward asylum seekers crossing the Mexico border—including increasing detention, separating children from parents and other means of stripping away basic rights amidst a proliferating discourse of "crisis"—point toward "an authoritarian turn in contemporary neoliberalism" in the United States (Gonzales 2020, 349). Gonzales draws on Bruff and Tansel who have argued that the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis has seen an increasing tendency toward forms of government that "seek to marginalize, discipline, and control dissenting social groups and oppositional politics rather than strive for their explicit consent or co-optation" (Bruff and Tansel 2019, 234). We are witness, Bruff argues, to "the rise of authoritarian neoliberalism" (Bruff 2014).

Like Bruff and Tansel I want to point to a contemporary increasingly authoritarian tendency of government in liberal "democracies" and beyond that is linked to the growing strength of right-wing populist politics, and to insist on recognizing such politics as a continuation of, not departure from, the neoliberal project. However, whereas Bruff's formulation implies that there was previously such a thing a non-authoritarian neoliberalism, I want to stress that neoliberalism has born authoritarian tendencies since—indeed most especially at—its inception. This is best exemplified in the politics of General Pinochet and his programmes of imposing free-market reforms upon Chile through authoritarian state terror under the guidance of Milton Friedman (Klein 2007; Whyte 2019); alongside Margaret Thatcher, and her ideological forerunner Enoch Powell, who introduced neoliberal economic reforms to the United Kingdom through a strategy of promoting, and then violently policing, specifically racist moral panics and "crises" (Gilroy 1991; Hall 1979; Hall et al. 2013; Solomos et al. 1982). The intervening decades did see the emergence of an ostensibly socially progressive neoliberal politics which embraces an official language of multi-culturalism, and from which the brazen ethnonationalism and racism of Trumpism, the Brexit movement, Hindu-nationalism and other contemporary right-wing populists do appear as a departure (Gökarıksel, Neubert, and Smith 2019). However,

not only has the hypocrisy and racist violence of that Third Way multiculturalism been well established (Ahmed 2012; Goodfellow 2019; Kapoor 2013; Povinelli 2011; Puar 2007; Simpson 2017; Torres 2018; Whyte 2019), it is also crucial to recognize that much of the security and legal architecture that is facilitating the authoritarian intensification of racialized border policing, detention, deportation and cultural control today was laid down under officially multiculturalist governments, such as by the Clinton and the Obama administrations in the United States (Cooper 2017; Martin 2012; Torres 2018). Indeed, as Gonzales remarks "Trump … ascended onto a state apparatus that was built on violence against the subaltern peoples from its very inception through the settler colonial state and that has been restructured over the last 35 years [that is to say, throughout the neoliberal era,] to police, incarcerate, deport, control, intimidate, and spy with greater efficiency" (Gonzales 2020, 350). Similarly, Torres argues that whilst "the construction of immigrants as terrorists, rapists, 'bad hombres,' and bad parents has been most virulent in the Trump administration, underpinning policies of racialized exclusion, such as the Muslim ban, family separation, and maniacal pursuit of the border wall, it is in fact an extreme extension of the logics already at play under previous administrations while the discourse of the United States as post racial flourished" (Torres 2018, 78). Nor have authoritarian policies toward migrants ceased with the demise of the right-wing populist Trump presidency (Herrera 2021; Montoya-Galvez 2021).

A further problem with Bruff and Tansel's theorization of "authoritarian neoliberalism" is that it hinges upon a supposed disjuncture between a politics of consent and that of coercion. In this it assumes as a starting point what is in fact an ideological claim of liberalism which is to say that liberal politics of "democracy" and "freedom" are somehow insulated from violence and coercion. A central insight of biopolitical theory, in contrast, is to stress the perpetual mutual dependency of liberal promises of freedom, democratic authority, and thus a politics of consent upon proliferating security apparatus, state violence and control (Dillon and Reid 2009; Foucault 2007; Puar 2007; Wilson 2013). Recognizing this is particularly significant when thinking about policies that operationalize racist divisions because it is precisely through the exercise of state racism that liberal states incorporate practices of control, containment and killing into the apparent pursuit of life—growth, health and freedom—through which biopolitical authority is obtained (Blencowe 2012, 2013; Foucault 1990, 2003; Mbembe 2001; McWhorter 2009; Morgensen 2011; Puar 2017; Stoler 1995). In this, racial oppression is not "just another" aspect of the social tension and inequality that is exacerbated in authoritarian and neoliberal politics, as implied by Bruff and Tansel, but is rather the central organizational technology enabling and driving authoritarianism.

My own understanding of neoliberal authoritarianism draws upon British cultural studies wherein authoritarianism is understood as a process in which demand for state violence and control is fostered through the manufacture of specifically racist social crises (Bhattacharyya et al. 2021; Gilroy 1991, 2004; Hall et al. 2013; Solomos et al. 1982); as well as upon biopolitical theory, through which we can identify the racist authoritarianism of neoliberal governance as the movement of "negative biopolitics"—that is to say, the generation of biopolitical authority by controlling and curtailing the lives of groups racialized as threatening, backwards, or dangerous (Blencowe 2012; McWhorter 2009; Tyler 2013; Valverde 2007). The sense of legitimacy crisis that surrounds the contemporary intensification of authoritarianism in the context of neoliberal reform is not, then, a question of coercion and violence swelling up to fill a vacuum of power and absence of consent (as per Arendt). Rather it can be understood as

the increasingly exclusive dependence of governments upon *negative* forms of biopolitics in order to *generate* authority, consent and desire for power amidst the decreasing capacity, or willingness, of states to perform the positive biopolitical functions of caring for collective life. Couze Venn argues that such negative, disruptive, despotic forms of biopolitical governmentality have always been paramount in colonial contexts, and he theorizes the violent, disruptive forms of neoliberal governmentality as a kind of generalization and extension of biopower's colonial tactics (Couze. 2009. see also Byrd et al. 2018; Tyler 2018). The argument of this paper dovetails with Venn's, identifying family debilitation as a technology of neoliberal biopower that quite consciously takes up and extends the colonial technologies of the "civilizing" mission.

SCENE 1: 2017—US/MEXICO BORDER

In 2017 the Trump administration introduced its "zero tolerance" anti-immigrant policy, which included separating children from their families at the US/Mexico border (AlJazeera 2019), see Figure 1. News reportage showed children being ripped from the arms of parents by border guards or being held in cages in cold concrete buildings wherein the most minimal standards of care were clearly unmet (Cullinane 2018). Accounts of dangerous overcrowding and of abuse in the deportation processing centers were rife (Sherman, Mendoza, and Burke 2019). Children could only lawfully be detained in these centers for 72 hours, but they were then moved onto to shelters for "Unaccompanied Alien Children" where they entered long drawn out processes of "family reunification" that could last for weeks or months. The adults they had been traveling

FIGURE 1 People protest the separation of children from their parents in front of the El Paso Processing Center, an immigration detention facility, at the Mexican border on June 19, 2018, in El Paso, Texas. (Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images).

with faced either immediate deportation or long periods of detention whilst asylum applications were processed. Caught up in these Kafkaesque processes, children and their family members often did not know of each other's whereabouts for weeks. Some children wrongly believed that their parents had been killed or had willfully abandoned them—a trauma from which parent-child relationships might never fully recover (Sherman, Mendoza, and Burke 2019). At best, communications were strictly limited. The official rationale for the policy was that adults could henceforth be prosecuted without the protections that had hitherto been granted to them in the name of the rights of the child. In reality, taking the children into charge of the state also grants the state incomparable coercive power over the family members who, ready to do anything to get their children back, are forced into extreme compliance (Gonzales 2020; Martin 2012). Parents would often give up on asylum applications and volunteer for deportation—returning to intolerable conditions—to escape the system and be reunited with their children.

In response to national and international outrage the policy of separating families at the border was officially dropped in 2018, but in practice it was continued through a drastic rise in incidents of border crossing children being taken into custody on the grounds of "child protection" (Kriel and Begley 2019). According to data provided by the government to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), more than 700 border crossing children were taken from their families between June 2018 and May 2019—that is to say, in the year *after* the family separation policy was dropped. As a lawyer for ACLU explains "the government is unilaterally deciding parents are a danger [to their children] and then separating them … without affording any due process to the family to contest the separation" (Lee Gerlant cited in (Kriel and Begley 2019). Traveling in any family formation other than nuclear is counted as being with "false family"—such that grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, family friends, or parents who lack the right documents, can be treated as though they are child traffickers. Parents are also being classified as a "danger" on grounds of criminality that are highly spurious. For example—where the parents have been prosecuted for criminal infractions as minor as traffic offenses, or having been previously accused of criminality despite having been acquitted of the charges, or being simply rumored to be associated with a gang. Given the violent situations from which they are fleeing, most asylum-seeking families are vulnerable to these kinds of accusations and thus to having their children taken away by US border guards.

Whilst Trump's 2017 policy was without doubt both horrific and deeply consequential, the practices involved of separating migrant families and detaining children were not so novel as the outraged media implied at the time. On the one hand, the ease with which children are taken from families in the name of "child protection" reflects the highly racialized patterns of child removal in the wider welfare system in the US and elsewhere. For example, American Indian and Black children in particular are removed from their families by welfare services in the US at vastly disproportionate rates (Kokaliari, Roy, and Taylor 2019; NCSL 2021). On the other, Trump's border polices were but "an extreme extension of logics already at play under previous administrations" (Speed 2020, 78; Gonzales 2020; Martin 2012; Torres 2018). In the financial year 2018 to 2019 some 69,550 migrant children were held in US government custody. Only a small fraction of these (circa 2,500) were there as a result of the separations at the border (Sherman, Mendoza, and Burke 2019). The others would have been detained anyway, without the new policy. The shelters that house the separated children when they move on from border detention centers had already been detaining migrant children for more than two decades. Most of these children are the victims

of a slower kind of violent separation. The criminalization and lethality of the US border, combined with the economic, political and ecological effects of neoliberalism, extractive economies, and criminalized narcotics throughout the Americas—all of which are sustained by US policy (Gonzales 2020; Saldaña-Portillo 2019; Speed 2020)—can itself be seen as an immensely effective tool of coercive family separation that has been operating for decades. The combination of economic, political, ecological and legal conditions drive countless families to live on either side of the border, or to attempt to cross the border separately in order to negotiate the differentiated costs and risks involved for different family members. A confluence of such conditions was dramatically manifest in 2014 when more than 60,000 unaccompanied children crossed the US/Mexico border (Gonzales 2020; Sherman, Mendoza, and Burke 2019). At that time, it was the Obama administration that shocked the world by detaining migrant children in cages and under canvas. Such children were classified as "unaccompanied" and taken into detention, despite the fact that that many knew exactly where, and to whom, they were going and that it would have been quite possible to unite those children with family in the US straight-away, had the state made that choice. Moreover, whilst Trump's successor, Joe Biden, has made a big show of condemning Trump's family separation policies, he has (so far, in this the first year of his presidency) indefinitely continued a Trump era pandemic emergency policy of expelling all migrants (Montoya-Galvez 2021). The inclusion of an exception to this order for unaccompanied minors has created a situation in which many asylum-seeking families trapped on the Mexican side of the border feel compelled to send their children on to cross the border alone (Herrera 2021).

There are more than a hundred shelters for unaccompanied alien children (UACs) currently in the US. They are financed and overseen by the Department for Health and Human Services (HHS) but are run by NGOs—some secular, some faith based—as well as by for profit companies. They have been shrouded in secrecy and lacked public oversight. Reports have emerged of conditions at these shelters resembling prisons more than schools . . . of children—from toddlers to teens—being subject to strict discipline, limited and ideological education, coercive health care, inadequate and dangerous mental health treatment (Cohen, Eldeib, and Sanchez 2018; Contributor 2019; Gonzales 2020). Even a report by the HHS's own Office of Inspector General found that that mental health care provision in the shelters is wholly inadequate (DHS 2019; Sherman, Mendoza, and Burke 2019). No visitors are allowed at the shelters and phone calls to family are strictly limited—such as 20 minutes a week, with no privacy during the call. The process has been described as "legalized kidnap" by one ex-employee (Contributor 2019). Children can be released to sponsors (usually family members) in the US, but only after processes of investigation taking months—with providers extracting financial and humanitarian capital all the while. Potential sponsors are contacted by shelter staff, but are kept in the dark about the children's whereabouts and forced to comply with various demands in order to have the children released to them, including submission to forms of surveillance that have led to sponsors themselves being prosecuted and deported (Martin 2012, 323). Sponsors have also been required to pay extortionate charges for travel and chaperones to facilitate reunification. On release, the children and their sponsors remain subject to surveillance, court orders and threats of deportation. Other children move directly from the shelters to deportation. A few shelters have been closed down following accusations of abuse (Cohen, Eldeib, and Sanchez 2018). But the very act of incarcerating children and separating them from their families is itself a form of child abuse with well documented long-term psychological consequences (Gonzales 2020; Torres 2018; Wood 2018).

CHILD ABUSE AS SPECTACLE

Child abuse is central to the US immigration system. That includes the illegal abuse that takes place amidst the violence of criminalized border crossing, as well as that which takes place in the detention centers and UAC shelters themselves. But is also includes the legalized acts of separating children from their families and detaining children—acts that are well known to be deeply traumatizing and generative of long-term damage to survivors' mental health and relationships. This abuse is, I want to suggest, a part of the spectacle of power through which the aesthetic regime of neoliberal authoritarianism is inscribed.

As Martin argued in 2012, the system of detention in the US is "as much a spectacle of state power, as it is an enforcement tactic" (Martin 2012, 325). Immigration enforcement, she argues, is not simply a response to migration, but rather is a disciplinary spectacle that is productive of the very "problems" and subjects to which it is ostensibly a response. This points to the ways in which increasingly harsh policies of enforcement actually encourage smuggling operations and criminality, but also to the ways in which—as she demonstrates—the experience and the fear of detention shape and control the lives of migrant populations far beyond the act of detention.

If detention was already a spectacle of state power, the Trump administration pumped up the show. The zero tolerance policies exacerbated the cruelty of the system, especially toward families and children—leading to more, longer, and more violent, separations and detentions. They also increased the media and public attention that is paid to these processes—making them more cruel, more dramatic, more shocking—and making them a central prop in Trump's political performance. The processes accumulate energy and attention—drama—be that in the abusive investments of Trump's supporters or the outrage and dismay of his opponents. That intensification of investment in spectacularised violence against migrant families is echoed in other neoliberal authoritarian governments around the world, such as in the UK.[1]

In asking for the "why" of these violent practices of bordering there are some very obvious answers. Trump and his ilk built their popularity through cultivating ethno-nationalism and calling for border controls. Violent practices of family separation—detaining children, refusing safe passage for refugee children—these measures might deter asylum seekers, reduce the numbers of "foreigners" and thus buttress an idealized ethnic purity of the nation. But that doesn't seem to capture the whole story. These measures are just too spectacular—they are too willfully, gleefully, excessively violent to simply be taken at face value as an effort to keep people out. There would surely be quieter, kinder and more effective ways to close down migration flows were that the sole aim. There is something excessive, "feverish" (Gökarıksel, Neubert, and Smith 2019), almost absurdist, in these policies. Their violence and cruelty is surely calculated to draw attention, and activism, and wrath … it seems less to engender a practical strategy of border control than it does a political spectacle. For the migrants caught up in these policies—as well as for all racialized minorities inhabiting neoliberal authoritarian nations—the effects are radical, world transforming, disciplining and wholly devastating (Griffiths and Morgan 2017; Jones 2016; Martin 2012; Saldaña-Portillo 2019; Torres 2018). The policies are, as such, utterly concrete. However, we can also understand these policies as a part of a performance, attempts to transform the world through an aesthetic register—to structure experience and control the political unconscious.

I want to ask, then, what is the show—the spectacle—of which such violence is a part? Why is family separation—institutionalized, willful, racialized abuse of children—entailed in the aesthetic regime of our neoliberal authoritarian governments? A part of the answer, I want to suggest, lies in recognizing the centrality of the family to the morality of neoliberalism.

FAMILY, CIVILIZATION, & THE GENEALOGY OF NEOLIBERAL MORALS

Focusing on the US, Cooper has argued that the promotion of "family values" as a moralizing project of social conservatism has been integral to the neoliberal project (Cooper 2017). The neoconservative "American nightmare" (Brown 2006) of radical neoliberal economists working in alliance with socially conservative moralists in the final decades of the twentieth century was no simple accident of political history. Rather, Cooper argues, neoliberal economics has *required* the (seemingly contradictory) social conservative moral agenda in order to function. As Thatcher long ago made clear those who think there is no such thing as society, are thinking instead about *family*.[2] Where neoliberalism sets out to smash apart the social-support infrastructure it does so on the assumption that the family will rise up to take its place. For many—Cooper shows—the whole rationale of smashing society is precisely to provoke this rising up of the family: a "restoration" of family responsibility and traditional family structures has been integral to the ambitions of neoliberal politicians and economists.

Cooper argues that, for neoliberals, the restoration of the normative family has been seen as a mechanism for pushing back against the egalitarian currents of the 1960s and 70s. Stagflation, social welfare, gender equality and the civil rights movement were egalitarian forces which were undermining the value of finance capital as well as the economic and political security of existent elites by the 1970s. All of these forces have been targeted and transformed through neoliberal policies that seek to reinstall "traditional" family responsibility. Cooper's examples include the promotion of student fees and debt under Regan (binding students' prospects to the financial well-being of their families rather than the state, whilst pacifying young people through proliferation of debt); the workfare regime introduced by Clinton (which rendered normative ideals about family obligation into legal responsibilities for benefits claimants and their blood kin); and the increasing role of Evangelical Churches in public service delivery throughout these decades. This family values politics was underwritten by highly racialized fantasies of poor and especially Black families as pathological and has played upon that in various ways, from the recruitment of Black Evangelical pastors into the Neo-Conservative fold through the articulation of social conservatism as racial uplift, through to the sheer disciplinary violence of denigrating fantasies and austerity policies the exacerbate poverty and raced inequality.

The idea of a pathology of welfare-dependency, which was used to justify both austerity and forms of coercive labor, was captured in the demonized image of "the welfare queen." She "was imagined as a Black woman who lived large off hardworking white taxpayers" and "personified everything that was supposedly wrong with welfare" having too much sex, too many children, and being "pathologically dependent on the government to support these habits, which she in turn passed to her children" (Kandaswamy 2021, 2–3; Cohen 1997). This demonizing imaginary draws upon fantasies formulated in relation to slavery, in which the

denial of kinship rights and separation of families was fundamental and which was significantly justified through theories of Black people as incapable of proper family relations (Cohen 1997; Kandaswamy 2021; Weheliye 2014). Kandaswarmy develops these connections to argue that neoliberal welfare reform and austerity should be understood as a direct manifestation of the afterlife of slavery—the strategies of austerity and discipline constitute, she suggests, a haunting from Reconstruction Era and its fears about freedpeople as a threat to social order. The welfare queen is, she argues, a ghostly reincarnation or "the vagrant" who was so feared in the years following emancipation and whose danger justified a proliferation of disciplinary policy. Kandaswarmy shows how an impossible heteropatriarchal ideal of the family was utilized at that time to rationalize austerity and displace claims for reparations "by locating the blame for freedpeople's economic hardships not in the legacy of slavery but rather with the Black family . . . privatizing responsibility for Black communities" well-being' (Kandaswamy 2021, 17–18). These strategies are revived in the austerity policies and rhetoric of workfare and the welfare queen, she argues, such that neoliberal welfare reform can be seen as a kind of haunting or palimpsest of reconstruction era policy. Both the Freedmen's Bureau and neoliberal workfare reforms mobilized an impossible ideal of motherhood to position Black women as "undeserving" and in need of surveillance and reform, a reform that is supposed to be achieved by pressing Black mothers into both marriage and disciplined labor (Kandaswamy 2021, 7).

Cooper offers a twofold explanation as to why the neoliberal economic agenda is so dependent upon the promotion of the conservative family. First, in a corrective to Marx, she explains that intensifications of capital extraction always tend to work in tandem with intensifications of the normative family. Whilst capitalism is famed for melting social structures, it does in fact always have to fall back upon the family as the "elementary legal form of private wealth accumulation " (Cooper 2017, 16–17, see also Davis 1983; Spivak 1985; Mies 2014; Federici 2014). Neoliberal economics, like any project of intensifying capital accumulation, depends upon the family to reproduce raced and classed inequality, which is the basis of the value of capital. Second, Cooper also argues that, whereas in other moments of capital intensification sexuality is just one amongst other modes of sociality available to ensure the social reproduction of inequality, neoliberal reforms strip all other structures of reproduction away. The extreme social-dissolution and dislocation that is specifically inflicted by financialization and neoliberal welfare reform is such that all other sites of social reproduction and value come unhinged. Normative sexuality and a conservative idealization of the family becomes the only remaining means of enforcing social reproduction—and thus of guaranteeing the enduring value of capital (see also Katz 2008). It is for this reason, Cooper argues, that the establishment of neoliberal hegemony has depended upon an excessive investment in the family and has been accompanied by theological movements that center on, and radicalize, the policing of women's bodies and sexuality (Cooper 2008, 2015, 2017).

Perhaps, then, we can draw a connection between the neoliberal valorization of the family as the site of value and the spectacular attacks on migrant, refugee and asylum seeking families that accompany neoliberal authoritarianism. As if somehow, in order to make the normative ideal of the American family as the seat of American values sufficiently powerful to carry the whole weight of the capitalist order, you have to attack, injure and destroy the family of the Other at the border—alongside that of racialized Others within. As Smith et al suggest, in

seeking to destroy family ties, Trumpist border policies did seem to afford a kind of perverse affirmation of the importance of family (Smith et al. 2019).

Whyte's genealogy of neoliberal morals (2019) gives us a further clue. She builds an argument that is similar to Cooper's—also making the case that neoliberalism has always been a deeply moral (as in moralistic, conservative-morality-promoting) project. She traces the connections of neoliberalism to the development of human rights discourse and politics since the 1970s—showing that this is not the oppositional relation that is often assumed by human rights activists. In fact, she shows, neoliberal philosophy has taken hold of and partially constructed the meaning of human rights (orienting their definition toward market freedoms), whilst neoliberal theorists genuinely see themselves as guardians of human rights (most obviously against purported human rights abuses of socialist governments). Like Cooper, Whyte is rejecting the image of neoliberalism as being about atomistic individualism or amoral economism. She shows that neoliberalism was, from the start, imagined as a project of restoring moral foundations.

Crucially, Whyte argues that the morality that neoliberalism seeks to restore—the morality of the market—was always consciously conceived as a continuation and revival of the "civilizing mission" of European imperialism. She notes that the stated aims of the Mont Pelerin society, written in 1947, declare that "the central values of civilization are in danger" (Whyte 2019, 35). Similarly Willhem Röpke—a key architect of neoliberalism—declared in 1969 "the spirit of the barbarians, which the Western peoples thought they had tamed by centuries of struggle, is abroad again and threatens to destroy the civilizing work of all these centuries" (Röpke 1969, 93), cited in (Whyte 2019, 35). The "spirit of the barbarians" here includes threats internal to European culture, including the idea of an illiberal "closed society" politics through which liberal theorists conflate communism with fascism.

Whyte shows how from its inception the Mont Pelerin Society was deeply invested in debates around *Christianity*. The architects of neoliberalism, she shows, were invested in holding up Christian culture as a "bulwark of freedom" (Whyte 2019, 35–74). Their new brand of liberalism was to be tied to a revival of a supposed connection between Liberalism and Christianity, and to the defense of "Christian civilization" against a common collectivist enemy embodied in both Communism and Islam.[3] The evangelical work of missionaries and of free marketeers were bound together in the neoliberal imaginary as a common project of "promoting freedom and civilization" against the marauding hordes of collectivist Communist and Muslim barbarians (Whyte 2019, 66–74). Running throughout this highly racialized imagining of freedom and its others, we can also hear the impress of slavery and the liberal heritage of defining freedom against an imagined condition of Black enslave-ability (Kandaswamy 2021; Patterson 2018). Decades before neoliberals were taking part in the backlash against civil rights and the egalitarianism of the 1970s, then, their project was already defined in wholly racialized, biopolitical terms as the pursuit and defense of Christian "western civilization" against threatening "barbarian" cultures.

Taken together, then, Cooper, Kandaswamy and Whyte show that neoliberalism is a moralizing project that is self-consciously dedicated to defending "western civilization," conceived of in terms of a centuries old Christian and Liberal "civilizing mission" against an egalitarian "barbarian" nature (associated with, amongst other things, communism, Islam and an imagined Black culture of enslaveability and dependency), and that a supposed restoration of "civilized" self-governance and control in the guise of "family responsibility" is a crucial part of this.

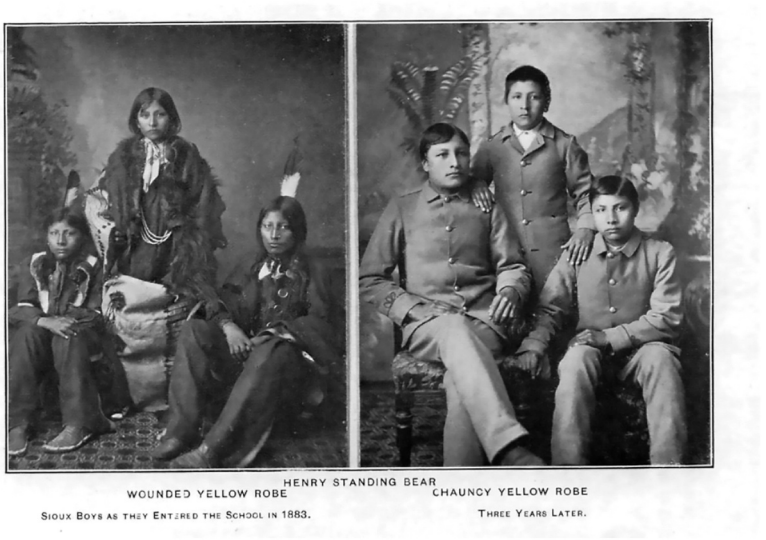

FIGURE 2 Sioux boys as they entered Carlisle Indian School in 1883 and three years later (image courtesy Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center).

These themes—the protection and promotion of "western civilization," Christianizing missions, and moral campaigns to install "proper" family relations—summon memories of earlier scenes of family separation and child detention on US, and other colonized, soil.

SCENE 2: PENNSYLVANIA 1879

These photos (see Figure 2) were taken in the 1880s at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, US. The school was founded and run by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, who gave the school his personal moto … "Kill the Indian Save the Man." On arrival at the school children would undergo a process of "deculturalisation"—the clothes and keepsakes they had brought with them from home would be taken and destroyed, their hair was cut, they were scrubbed in near scalding water and initiated in the rituals of a "civilizing" education … segregated by sex, forced to wear military style uniforms, disciplined into strict time schedules, banned from speaking except in English. Pratt took these "before and after" photos of the children in order to advertise the "good works" of the school—staking his claim to "civilize savages." The Carlisle School served as model for others across the US and Canada.

Coerced family separation and child detention has been central to the experience of indigenous people in North America since the late nineteenth century (Jacobs 2009). These practices—which continue both to ramify and, in different forms, replicate—are part of the ongoing work of settler colonialism, undermining the sovereignty claims and survival

capacities of indigenous people by breaking their links to each other, to their histories, to knowledge, to ecological systems and lands (Fear-Segal et al. 2016; Morgensen 2012; Simpson 2017). They are tools of cultural genocide. These practices were echoed in the educational institutions of governments and missionaries across the British Empire (Fred 1988; Lomawaima 1999, 2002; Tamez 2016).

In North America the most notorious institution in the long, diverse, and ongoing history of indigenous family separation is the off-reservation boarding school (Daigle 2019; Smith et al. 2019)—such as the Carlisle School. These were first established in the final decades of the nineteenth century and ran well into the mid twentieth (Fear-Segal et al. 2016; Jacobs 2009). In Canada the last of these schools closed its doors in the 1990s (Daigle 2019). Children were removed vast distances from their communities to reside at these schools, physically separated from their families for months or years on end, with many discouraged or prevented from visiting home at all during this time.

The abuse at the Carlisle School is now legend (Fear-Segal et al. 2016). Children were beaten for speaking in their own languages, for attempting to talk to siblings of the opposite sex, for practicing rituals or music from home, or attempting to run away. The educational programme included daily Church services which denounced indigenous life ways as demonic. Many children did run away—as many as 140 in 1913—despite the immense danger of doing so. In addition to the psychological and physical violence of cultural erasure, children were also subject to dangerously unsanitary conditions and neglect. In the first year of the school's opening two children died. In one year, 1888, twenty-one children died. By the time of the school's closure in 1918 at least 186 students were buried in the school cemetery.

Far outlasting the physical separation that was imposed on families during the years that the children were at school, the cultural, physical and spiritual trauma inflicted generated deep and enduring distance between indigenous children and their families. Often children would blame their parents for abandoning them—even though the parents had had little, if any, choice. Deep wounds were left in the family bond. Countless stories of boarding school survivors attest to the profound alienation experienced on the return home and incapacity to reconnect with family and community. Evidence of the long duree of trauma includes the high suicide rates amongst the children of boarding school survivors, as well as legacies of intergenerational violence.

Intergenerational trauma and pathologies—alcoholism, depression, suicide, abusive family relations, lost generations, thousands of missing women; the repetition of indigenous family separation through so called "child protection" policies right into the present era; the intensely racialized distribution of people's vulnerability to abuse and exploitation (Anderson 1988; Fear-Segal et al. 2016; Haig-Brown 1988; Simpson 2017) … This scar tissue matters the metaphysics of Race—inscribing the fantasy of the white/modern supremacist racist order of being deep into lived experience.

CIVILIZATIONAL EDUCATION AND THE BIOPOLITICAL AESTHETIC OF SETTLER SOVEREIGNTY

The residential Indian Schools were conceived as part of what we might describe as a *biopolitical turn in colonial governance*. By the mid-nineteenth century the US government was seeking to distance itself from the explicit war footing of previous centuries and to develop

a new Indian Policy that would treat indigenous people less as the enemy to be vanquished, and more as a problematic, dangerous, part of the population to be managed. The final solution to the "Indian problem" was no longer physical annihilation but rather "civilization," assimilation, and cultural control—the policy that we now describe as cultural genocide (Fear-Segal et al. 2016; Lomawaima 1999). The liberal, biopolitical, rationale of power was unfurling through which state and non-state power henceforth needed to justify itself as service to, and "taking care" of, the life of the population.

The dehumanizing narratives about indigenous people that had previously facilitated the colonial war relation, were repurposed in this new biopolitics to cast indigenous people in the role of "defective life." This enabled agents of governmentality to extract a kind of humanitarian capital from indigenous people—performing the liberal-authority role of "improving life," through practices of subjecting indigenous people to control (Morgensen 2011). Through the currents of liberal biopolitical governmentality that were being worked out across the Anglo and European Empires at the time, family relations, education and child rearing emerged as a paramount site of governmental intervention—be that undertaken by agents of the state, the new swathe of caring professions, charities or churches (Blencowe 2012; Foucault 1990; Foucault, Davidson, and Burchell 2008; McWhorter 2009; Morgensen 2012; Schuller 2018; Stoler 2010; Valverde 2008; Weinbaum 2004). Across these contexts the purportedly caring concern of reformers for the wellbeing of "the poor and unfortunate" was intertwined with fear of the same people as sources of degeneracy and contamination, capable of degrading the health and civilization of the whole population. Practices of education and cultural control were thus intertwined with criminalization and the policing of "dangerous" lifeways; incarceration; and militarized segregation. The reorientation of "Indian Policy" toward the management of dangerous life ways through cultural control, incarceration and segregation found it's parallel in the emergent policies toward freedpeople in the era, wherein Black family relations and gender were constituted as a terrain of "cultural reform," obfuscating the material legacies of slavery and displacing claims for reparations and land redistribution, at the same time as transforming and radically expanding the disciplinary state apparatus (Kandaswamy 2021, 7).

As part of this combination of containment and care, a distinctive narrative emerged within the educational discourse of the Anglo-Empire around "separate but equal development," wherein the militant policing of segregation and control was portrayed as itself a practice of "care for the natives" (Lomawaima 1999). The Indian reservations of North America were one of the clearest expressions of this educationalist-segregationalist-colonial policy. Another was South African apartheid.

Decades before the introduction of eugenicist controls on sexual reproduction in the early 20th century, then, various agencies were already attempting to ameliorate the life of the population and eradicate "racial deficiencies" through the reform movement and practices that centered on the control of childhood (Schuller 2018; Stoler 2010). Schuller defines these practices as instruments of "*biophilanthropy*, or the elite middle-class effort to impress a new heritable endowment in the bodies and minds of the children of the poor and otherwise allegedly 'uncivilized' in order to render their labor profitable to the population as a whole" (Schuller 2018, 136). She positions the off-reservation boarding schools alongside a host of programs directed at impoverished children in the US at the time—such as the "orphan trains programme" of the Children's Aid Society (CAS). Between 1854 and 1929 CAS moved around 100,000 purportedly orphaned children from poor communities in New York, mostly of Irish,

Italian or German descent, to live with white Protestant families in rural areas. The children would serve as domestic and agricultural laborers in exchange for a supposedly more healthy, ameliorative, "home" environment and good Christian upbringing.

The programs of biophilanthropy were primarily carried out by private organizations, charities churches and religious groups with state support. Whilst Schuller rightly emphasizes the dependence of these schemes on Lamarkian, environmental and sentimentalist theories of human evolution that were popular in the era, they were clearly also indebted to a longer tradition of protestant and reformist missionary theologies of salvation and world-redemption through Christianizing education and discipline (see Blencowe 2012; Mbembe 2017; Medovoi 2012; Valverde 2008). Schuller recognizes that differently racialized categories of the poor were very differently exposed to violence within schemes of biophilanthropy—with evolutionary reform cast as a passage through *figurative* death for the white urban poor, but as a passage through *actual* death for indigenous peoples (Schuller 2018, 164). Nonetheless, she argues that all these practices can be understood as engaged in a common biopolitical project of improving population life by rendering the bodies of the poor into well-disciplined useful laborers for the rapidly industrializing capitalist economy.

Jacobs (2009) situates the biopolitical utility of the schools a bit differently than does Schuller. She suggests that their objective was less about producing the right kind of workers, or "useful bodies," than it was about producing the *narrative* of race hierarchy, evolution and civilization that is so essential to the rationale of settler colonial sovereignty. Jacobs explores the role of white women and feminists—or "maternalists"—in the promotion and operation of off-reservation boarding schools in the US alongside parallel practices of family separation that were simultaneously being imposed upon on aboriginal people in Australia. The schools offered an opportunity for their founders and patrons to perform the part of "agents of good works"—as bringers of civilization and motherly care to "poor" savage children. This performance was not only a play of moral uprightness on the part of those individuals but was also a key strategy through which individuals and groups could claim authority and a share of power in the emergent liberal state and civil society. Jacobs specifically centers on how the schools served as a platform for a eugenicist "maternalism" through which many relatively privileged women sought to carve out a degree of public influence and authority, or at least gainful employment, amidst a patriarchal regime that generally denied women access to public power.

Whilst privileged white groups struggled between themselves over access to resources and authority through biopolitical claims to be the rightful caretakers (mothers or fathers) of the nation, they simultaneously bolstered the sovereignty of the settler colonial state—giving substance to its claim to be the rightful caretaker of both the land and of indigenous people.

Crucially, Jacobs shows that the schools produced not only the myth of the white savior and the civilizing process, but also the myth of *the childlike savage* who is need of civilization. An essential part of this is the enduring myth of the ill-informed, immoral or otherwise inherently incompetent indigenous mother who is supposedly incapable of taking care of her own children. Again this finds strong parallels in the policy and discourse surrounding freedpeople in the era, wherein narratives that had justified slavery by positioning Black people as both childlike and as incompetent parents (either inherently so or as a result of their "brutalization" through slavery) were repurposed in the service of emergent regimes of segregation and discipline (Kandaswamy 2021).

Drawing on Jacobs, then, we might situate the biopolitical productivity of the off-reservation boarding school less in the production of useful docile workers and more in the aesthetic production of the narrative of civilization—with its requisite mythology of incompetent child-like people who are in need of the care-taking sovereignty of the white matron, school master, and, ultimately, the settler colonial state (see also Byrd et al. 2018; Morgensen 2011, 2012). Whatever the practical impact of the schools on their students, their very existence as institutions served as a crucial instrument of the aesthetic regime of settler sovereignty—bolstering narratives of the white settler nation as mature civilized people taking care of unfortunate childlike savages.

CHILD ABUSE, DEBILITATION & THE SETTLER COLONIAL AESTHETIC

There is a vast indigenous studies literature on off-reservation boarding schools and their implications (for example Anderson 1988; Haig-Brown 1988; Lawrence 2004; Lomawaima 1999, 2002). Much of this literature focuses squarely on the question of sovereignty and how the boarding schools participated in the settler colonial appropriation of indigenous land. For example, Margo Tamez and other authors of *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories and Reclamations* explore multiple ways in which the school contributed to the ongoing removal of indigenous people from the land and destruction of indigenous sovereignty (Fear-Segal et al. 2016; Tamez 2016). The central theme here is cultural genocide and the ways that the school participated in the attempt to provide "a final solution" to the Indian problem through the erasure of indigenous people *as* indigenous. Indigenous scholars emphasize that the attempted erasure of indigenous culture is a wholly material, political, strategy—working to undermine and destroy not only a "minority culture" or identity but an alternative and competing political system and prior claim to sovereignty. The schools are situated here primarily as instruments of *dispossession*—refusing indigenous sovereignty claims, breaking indigenous peoples' links to territory, whilst destroying solidarity and strength.

Another key focus of this indigenous scholarship is abuse—emphasizing the intense intergenerational trauma that the schools have inflicted, as well as the immense work of contemporary indigenous communities toward healing, renewal and survival.

A common tendency in official accounts of abuse in institutions is to characterize it as a series of accidents or failings that corrupt the good intentions of the institution. However, as this literature makes clear, the prevalence of abuse at the boarding schools—as well as the deeply abusive nature of the very act of separating children from their families, communities and lands in the first place—is such that it makes more sense to see abuse as an integral part of the system (Haig-Brown 1988; Jacobs 2009; Lawrence 2004) . I want to suggest that we understand child abuse in these schools as a key part of the colonial infrastructure, as a silenced but wholly integral weapon of cultural genocide and the civilizing mission, in the same way that we recognize the rape that is carried out en masse by soldiers as a silenced but wholly integral—clearly intentional however unspoken—technique of genocidal war.

Nishnabeg author Simpson brings these themes together in her concept of *expansive dispossession* (Simpson 2017). Expansive dispossession highlights how the imposition of gender norms, discipline, stereotyping and psychological abuse all contribute to the destruction of Nishnabeg sovereignty—and are essential to the practices by which the Canadian state

maintains its sovereignty against alternative indigenous political systems. She outlines the immense political and material implications of the shame and emotional trauma that is especially inflicted on indigenous children, women and Two Spirits/Queer people through the colonial regimes of morality. The psychological trauma that was inflicted through the Indian schools and other instruments of cultural genocide created a kind of ongoing occupation of the very soul of indigenous people. Expansive dispossession, she argues, extends from the occupation of land, to the occupation of spirit, the body, and the psyche, which is now forever "caught up processing the backlog of emotional trauma" (Simpson 2017, 43). Such occupation depletes and destroys capacities to resist and to reassert indigenous sovereignty.

Daigle sets out how these processes of expansive dispossession continue to unfold in contemporary Canada even within the processes that are ostensibly intended to deliver redress (Daigle 2019). Whereas indigenous issues are largely erased from mainstream media and consciousness in the United States, Canada is engaged in a Truth and Reconciliation process about the residential schools. As a part of this sensationalized stories of indigenous suffering have become a media staple, coupled with "hollow performances" of settler remorse and reconciliation. The processes of evidence gathering and reporting in the TRC involved violence toward indigenous people in multiple ways—not least through the perpetual retraumatising recounting of abuse and trauma. Moreover "the state's fetishization of Indigenous suffering tied to the *history* of residential schools" distorts time, situating colonial violence as a fact of the past and distracting from "the ongoing truths of the colonial present, including state violence inflicted on land and water protectors, the ongoing apprehension of Indigenous children through the child welfare system and heteropatriarchal violence against Indigenous women, queer, Two-Spirit and trans individuals" (Daigle 2019, 704). Perversely, despite the recognition given in these processes to the fact that it is colonial violence that created indigenous suffering, the narrative that is being produced is still one in which indigenous people appear as damaged and incompetent (see also Tuck 2009), and through which the present day white settlers claim humanitarian capital as the ones who possess the power of salvation—here, in making up for the sins of the past. This "spectacle of reconciliation … secures, legitimates and effectively reproduces white supremacy and settler futurity in Canada" (Daigle 2019, 706).

Although it is addressed to a very different context—namely the occupation of Palestine—Puar's recent work on the biopolitics of settler colonialism and disability, or debilitation, resonates with Simpson's argument (Puar 2017). As outlined above, Puar revises biopolitical theory and draws on critical disability studies to argue that *debilitations* of life—tactics through which people and populations are permanently incapacitated (and capacitated *as* incapacitated)—are crucial to the productivity and profitability of settler colonialism. Debilitation is made profitable, she argues, through the complex of medicine, construction, arms and security industries, debt, insurance, humanitarian-aid and research—which effectively mine debilitated bodies for profit. Moreover, she insists that the *legitimacy* of settler colonial states depends upon the racialized production of debilitated populations wherein the existence of debilitated bodies becomes a justification for the appropriation of sovereignty—the debilitated are not capable and thus have no claim to self-rule. Debilitated bodies function as props in the performance of liberal humanitarianism, generating settler colonial legitimacy through a kind of "humanitarian capital." The redemptive progress narrative of modern settler colonialism requires, she argues, the "narrative protheses" of "rubbish-people" as characters in the play of rehabilitation. White ascendency requires incapable bodies in relation to which the dispossessor

can be constructed as both transcendent and as kindly benefactor "thus preserving the 'civilized' alibi of the project" (Medien and Puar 2018, 99).

Drawing Puar's argument together with Simpson's concept of expanded dispossession points toward a thinking of the Indian Schools of North America as technologies of debilitation—producing indigenous children as "rubbish people" through debilitating violence—not by physically maiming so much as through the psychological violence of systematic child abuse. The debilitating violence of biopolitical settler colonialism is not only inflicted upon the bodies and souls of individuals, but also upon the *collective* body of families, communities and nations—it is a violence that seeks to debilitate capacities for care, resistance and regeneration. By wounding and debilitating family relations, actually damaging people's capacities to take care at the same time as generating a mythos around the "incapable" indigenous mother, family debilitation produces a fantasy of the settler colonial state as legitimate—as the provider of necessary services; whilst simultaneously undermining the alternative sovereignty that is engendered in indigenous relationships to land, community and kin. As Diagle intimates, the recognition that contingent factors—including the violence of the colonial state itself—are responsible for the conditions of indigenous incapacity does nothing to prevent the settler state from continuing to position itself as transcendent and as kindly benefactor—deriving authority and bolstering claims to sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

I want to begin to conclude by acknowledging the difficulty of writing about these technologies of power, wherein wounds are inflicted—that we want to recognize and denounce—and yet the perpetrators of the violence benefit from the racialized image of the victims as wounded. It is with good reason that Tuck has called for a moratorium on damage centered research (Tuck 2009). As she argues, even well-intentioned research that seeks to illuminate colonial violence can participate in the perpetuation of that violence through the production of images of indigenous people as damaged and incapable. In this paper I have attempted, however successfully, to follow the spirit of that moratorium by taking a step back from the intensity of migrant child detention and the wounds that it inflicts, to gain a view upon the aesthetic regime and technologies of power of which it forms a part. By attending to two disparate scenes in the long history of colonial family debilitation I have attempted to situate child detention and abuse, instances of family debilitation, as strategies within aesthetic regimes. The "problems" to which they serve as a kind of technical solution are not the problems of migrant and indigenous families—these abusive institutions are not simply failing welfare programmes. Rather they are a response to a problem that emerges from the paradoxical logics and dilemmas of biopolitical sovereignty and its dependence upon racialized fantasies—specifically the legitimacy crises that ensue where biopolitical governments undertake to dispossess and destroy life. Further, the paper attempts to situate these strategies of family debilitation as a part of the authoritarian thrust—the movement of negative biopolitics—that is inherent to neoliberal rule. It is that rule, the political economy of dispossession that drives it, and the metaphysics of race on which it depends, that I am ultimately attempting to analyze and to challenge.

The paper holds these two scenes of child detention together in the hope that they illuminate each other to make clearer the workings of the metaphysics of race and the negative production of biopolitical authority.

There is, of course, no shortage of direct continuity between these two scenes. The US remains a settler colony whose sovereignty is permanently placed in question by the persistence and history of indigenous people, and which must thus perpetually generate self-justificatory spectacles as well as suppressing indigenous peoples' capacities to claim rights. A large proportion of the children and families that are targeted by contemporary border control in the US are also indigenous (NAISA, Native American and Indigenous Studies Association 2018; Speed 2020). To a large extent, then, scene one is simply a continuation of scene two.

However, there are also connections of analogy—a kind of functional or technological repetition between the colonial biopolitical moment that birthed the regimes of civilizational education in the 19th-century, and the neoliberal moment that invests in authoritarianism, moral panics, and border violence against a backdrop of decimated and appropriated welfare infrastructure. In both instances an idea of "protecting civilization" is mobilized alongside the civilizational-cultural metaphysics of race to generate biopolitical authority for a state whose legitimacy is placed radically in question as it oversees the dispossession and destruction of the peoples, lands, and lives of its jurisdiction.

We have seen that family debilitation, inscribing a metaphysics of race wherein indigenous people are made to appear as backwards, dangerous, and incapable—especially as incapable parents—works to secure the sovereignty of the settler colonial state in at least two ways. First, by attempting to debilitate generational time, quashing alternative sovereignty claims by undermining future resistance and the reproduction of indigenous peoples *as* indigenous. Second, by deriving capital, including a kind of humanitarian capital, or biopolitical authority, for the settler state by positioning the state as that which improves the life of the nation, as both the guardian taking "care" in place of incompetent parents, and as the security guard containing the threat and preventing contamination. This violence produces actual wounds in sociality—making it harder for people to organize to demand and defend rights. It also produces biopolitical spectacles through which state violence against people who have been racialized as backwards, threatening or incapable is portrayed as a work on behalf of the amelioration of the life of the nation. It produces the metaphysics of race and attempts to inscribe this aesthetic regime as lived experience; to structure and control the political unconscious.

The practices of family separation and child detention in contemporary border regimes can be seen as a further instance of this technology of family debilitation. The violence that is inflicted upon migrant children and families in the border regime of the United States—as also in the UK and elsewhere—can be understood as not simply an attempt to keep migrants out, buttress the ethnic purity of the nation, or effect "the elimination of the migrant," but rather as an attempt to establish a permanent structure of investment in the debilitation of migrants, generating biopolitical authority for the nation state—turning the authoritarian wheel. It is a way of responding to the legitimacy crisis that inevitably ensues whenever biopolitical governments undertake to dispossess, destroy, or press into poverty members of their own population.

Family debilitation points to relationships, especially with children, as paramount sites of negative (as well as positive) biopolitics. The most infamous instances of negative biopolitics are the thanatopolitical strategies of eugenics, which operate on the events of biological

reproduction—sex, fertility, birth and death. However, where the constructivist cultural/religious form of the metaphysics of race is at play, as is articulated in the idea of "civilization," then family relations, education, and childcare become just as important (see also Schuller 2017; Blencowe 2012). Neoliberalism, with its constructivist ontology, its knowledge economy, its attempts to control education and culture, and its positioning of religion and family as the site of morality, hinges upon that civilizational metaphysics, and thus upon family debilitation, as much as does the colonial project (of which it is, in part, an explicit continuation). The current intensification of violence toward migrant children and family relations can be situated within the affective and aesthetic technologies of a government that wagers its authority upon the biopolitical claim to care for life, whilst simultaneously waging its political economy on the dispossession and decimation of the living.

However successful or not this paper is in analyzing and challenging that aesthetic regime the far more important work is that of indigenous and other migrant scholars, activists, artists, and educationalists whose work evades the biopolitical script of incapacity and isolation, whose very being—that othered humanity (Wynter 1989)—contradicts and confounds the civilizational metaphysics of race. As Puar notes in relation to Palestinians (Puar 2017, 152), and as is amply demonstrated in the work of indigenous scholars committed to a politics of resurgence such as Simpson (2017), generational debilitation—quashing of future dissent—is a *fantasy* of biopower, a fantasy that is perpetually revealed as such by the enduring vitality, resistance, and resurgence of the dispossessed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to the insightful anonymous reviewers, Deborah Dixon, the Forum editors Julian Brigstocke and Günter Gassner, Naomi Millner and Linsey McGoey for comments on earlier versions of this paper that have much improved the end result. Thanks also to Jasbir Puar, Goldie Osuri and participants in the Warwick Social Theory Centre (Anti-)Masterclass in 2019, which was crucial to germinating these ideas.

NOTES

1. For example, the ascension to majority power of Boris Johnson's government in 2019 was marked by a dramatic and deliberately controversial retraction of previous government commitments around he rights of refugee children to family reunification. (Grant 2019; Kentish 2019; Merrick 2020; Woodcock and Cowburn 2020). This event was but one small item in a spectacular procession of policies that have been rolled out by UK governments over the past decade that are specifically designed to cultivate a "hostile environment" for migrants (Goodfellow 2019)—a hostility that is manifest in major part by separating families (Bulman 2018; Griffiths and Morgan 2017; Light 2018; Turner 2020).
2. Margret Thatcher's famous assertion that "there is no such thing as society" continued "there are individual men and women and there are families" (Thatcher 1987).
3. The idea of Christianity that the neoliberal thinkers were defending was, of course, highly selective. Their defense of "Christian civilization" would clearly not extend to the egalitarian currents of Christian theology and activism, such as liberation theology or the social gospel.

REFERENCES

Adkins, L. 2018. *The time of money*. Berkeley: Stanford University Press.

Ahmed, S. 2012. *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Durham: Duke University Press.

AlJazeera. 2019. "Migrant children separated from family show signs of PTSD: Report." AlJazeera, September 4, 2019. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/09/migrant-children-separated-family-show-signs-ptsd-report190904160323720.html?utm_source=website&utm_medium=article_page&utm_campaign=read_more_links

Anderson, K. 1988. *A recognition of being: Reconstructing native womanhood*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Bhattacharyya, G., A. Elliot-Cooper, S. Balani, K. Nisancioglu, K. Koram, D. Gebrail, N. El-Enany, and S. Luke De. 2021. *Empire's endgame: Racism and the British state*. London: Pluto Press.

Blencowe, C. 2012. *Biopolitical experience: foucault, power and positive critique*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Blencowe, C. 2013. Biopolitical authority, objectivity and the groundwork of modern citizenship. *Journal of Political Power* 6 (1):9–28. doi:10.1080/2158379x.2013.774968.

Brown, W. 2006. American nightmare: Neoliberalism, neoconservatism, and de-democratization. *Political Theory* 34 (6):690–714. doi:10.1177/0090591706293016.

Bruff, I. 2014. The rise of authoritarian neoliberalism. *Rethinking Marxism* 26 (1):113–29. doi:10.1080/08935696.2013.843250.

Bruff, I., and C. B. Tansel. 2019. Authoritarian neoliberalism: Trajectories of knowledge production and praxis. *Globalizations* 16 (3):233–44. doi:10.1080/14747731.2018.1502497.

Bulman, M. 2018. "Home office separating scores of children from parents as part of immigration detention regime." *The Independent*, July 4. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/immigration-child-separation-parents-uk-home-office-immigrant-detention-a8431671.html.

Byrd, J. A., A. Goldstein, J. Melamed, and C. Reddy. 2018. Predatory value: Economies of dispossession and disturbed relationalities. *Social Text* 36 (2):1–18. doi:10.1215/01642472-4362325.

Carter, J. K. 2019. Black malpractice (a poetics of the sacred). *Social Text* 37 (2):67–107. doi:10.1215/01642472-7370991.

Cohen, C. 1997. Punks, Bulldaggers and Welfare Queens: The radical potential of queer politics? *GLQ* 3 (4):437–65. doi:10.1215/10642684-3-4-437.

Cohen, J., D. Eldeib, and M. Sanchez. 2018. "'Hidden in plain sight': Hundreds of immigrant children and teens housed in opaque network of Chicago-Area shelters." *ProPublica*, July 27, 2018. https://www.propublica.org/article/illinois-chicago-children-teens-immigration-shelters-heartland.

Contributor, A. 2019. "Former detention staff speaks out: "This is legalized kidnapping." itisgoingdown.org. https://itsgoingdown.org/this-is-legal-kidnapping-former-child-detention-staff-speaks-out/

Cooper, M. 2008. Orientalism in the mirror: The sexual politics of anti-westernism. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25 (6):25–49. doi:10.1177/0263276408095543.

Cooper, M. 2015. The theology of emergency: Welfare reform, US foreign aid and the faith-based initiative. *Theory, Culture & Society* 32 (2):53–77. doi:10.1177/0263276413508448.

Cooper, M. 2017. *Family values: Between neoliberalism and the new social conservatism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cooper, M. E. 2011. *Life as surplus: Biotechnology and capitalism in the neoliberal era*. Washington: University of Washington Press.

Couze., V. 2009. Neoliberal political economy, biopolitics and colonialism: A transcolonial genealogy of inequality. *Theory, Culture & Society* 26 (6):206–33. doi:10.1177/0263276409352194.

Cullinane, S. 2018. "Inside Border Protection's processing detention center: Chain link fences and thermal blankets." *CNN Politics*, June 18, 2018. https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/18/politics/immigration-mcallen-border-patrol-photos/index.html.

d'Aoust, A.-M. 2013. In the name of love: Marriage migration, governmentality, and technologies of love. *International Political Sociology* 7 (3):258–74. doi:10.1111/ips.12022.

Daigle, M. 2019. The spectacle of reconciliation: On (the) unsettling responsibilities to Indigenous peoples in the academy. *Environment and Planning. D, Society & Space* 37 (4):703–21. doi:10.1177/0263775818824342.

Davis, A. 1983. *Women, Race & Class*. London: Vintage.

DHS. 2019. *Manangement altert – DHS needs to address dangerous overcrowing and prolounged detention of children and adults in the Rio Grande Valley (Redacted*). Washington: Department for Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General.
Dillon, M., and J. Reid. 2009. *The liberal way of war: Killing to make life live*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Fassin, É. 2010. National identities and transnational intimacies: Sexual democracy and the politics of immigration in Europe. *Public Culture* 22 (3):507–29. doi:10.1215/08992363-2010-007.
Fear-Segal, J., S. D. Rose, S. Momaday, C. Bilodeau, M. Kenny, B. Landis, L. White, J. Bloom, E. Jorda, B. Landis, et al. 2016. *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous histories, memories, and reclamations*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Federici, S. 2014. *Caliban and the witch: Women, capitalism and primitive accumulation (second*. revised ed. New York: Autonomedia.
Feldman, K. P., and L. Medovoi. 2016. Race/Religion/War an introduction. *Social Text* 34 (4):1–17. doi:10.1215/01642472-3680834.
Foucault, M. 1990. *The history of sexuality: An introduction*. London: Vintage.
Foucault, M. 2003. *Society must be defended*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Foucault, M. 2007. *Security, territory, population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*. Basingstoke: Springer.
Foucault, M., A. I. Davidson, and G. Burchell. 2008. *The birth of biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Basingstoke: Springer.
Fred, R. 1988. Foreword. In *Resistance and renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School*, ed. C. Haig-Brown, 9–12. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
Gibson-Graham, J. K. 1997. The end of capitalism (as we knew it): A feminist critique of political economy. *Capital & Class* 21 (2):186–88. doi:10.1177/030981689706200111.
Gilroy, P. 1991. *There ain't no Black in the Union Jack': The cultural politics of race and nation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Gilroy, P. 2004. *After empire: Melancholia or convivial culture?* Abingdon: Routledge.
Gökarıksel, B., C. Neubert, and S. Smith. 2019. Demographic fever dreams: Fragile masculinity and population politics in the rise of the global right. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 44 (3):561–87. doi:10.1086/701154.
Goldberg, D. T. 2016. Militarizing race. *Social Text* 34 (4):19–40. doi:10.1215/01642472-3680846.
Gonzales, A. 2020. Derechos en crisis: Central American asylum claims in the age of authoritarian neoliberalism. *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 8 (2):334–52. doi:10.1080/21565503.2018.1472018.
Goodfellow, M. 2019. *Hostile environment: How immigrants became scapegoats*. London: Verso Books.
Grant, H. 2019. "Brexit: Johnson condemned for dropping pledge to replace family renuion law." *The Guardian*, December 22, 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/22/brexit-johnson-condemned-for-dropping-pledge-to-replace-family-reunion-law
Griffiths, M., and C. Morgan. 2017. Immigration enforcement and Article 8 rights: Mixed-immigration status families - Political emphasis on forced removal is splitting up and harming families. Bristol: University of Bristol Press.
Haig-Brown, C. 1988. *Resistance and renewal: Surviving the Indian residential school*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
Hall, S. 1979. The great moving right show. *Marxism Today* 23 (1):14–20.
Hall, S., C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke, and B. Roberts. 2013. *Policing the crisis: Mugging, the state and law and order*. London: Macmillan International.
Herrera, J. 2021. "Biden brings back family separation - This time in Mexico." *Politico Magazine*, March 20, 2021.
Jacobs, M. D. 2009. *White mother to a dark race: Settler colonialism, maternalism, and the removal of indigenous children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Jones, R. 2016. *Violent borders: Refugees and the right to move*. London: Verso Books.
Kandaswamy, P. 2021. *Domestic contradictions: Race and gendered citizenship from reconstruction to welfare reform*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Kapoor, N. 2013. The advancement of racial neoliberalism in Britain. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (6):1028–46. doi:10.1080/01419870.2011.629002.
Katz, C. 2008. Cultural geographies lecture: Childhood as spectacle: Relays of anxiety and the reconfiguration of the child. *Cultural Geographies* 15 (1):5–17. doi:10.1177/1474474007085773.

Kentish, B. 2019. “Vulnerable refugees face ‘legal limbo’ and separation from families if there is no-deal Brexit, parliamentary committee warns.” *The Independent*, October 11, 2019. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-no-deal-refugees-asylum-seekers-house-of-lords-a9151326.html.

Klein, N. 2007. *The shock doctrine: The rise of disaster capitalism*. London: Macmillan.

Kokaliari, E. D., A. W. Roy, and J. Taylor. 2019. African American perspectives on racial disparities in child removals. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 90:139–48. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.12.023.

Kriel, L., and D. Begley. 2019. “Trump administration still separating hundred of migrant children at the border through often questionable claims of danger.” *Houston Chronicle*, June 22, 2019. https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Trump-administration-still-separating-hundreds-of-14029494.php.

Larner, W. 2003. Neoliberalism? *Environment and Planning. D, Society & Space* 21:509–12. doi:10.1068/d2105ed.

Lawrence, B. 2004. *“Real” Indians and others: Mixed-blood urban native peoples and indigenous nationhood*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Light, M. 2018. “Theresa May’s hostile immigration regime destroys another family.” *OpenDemocracy*, March 29, 2018. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/shine-a-light/theresa-may-s-hostile-immigration-regime-destroys-another-british-family/.

Lomawaima, K. T. 1999. The unnatural history of American Indian education. In *Next steps: Research and practice to advance Indian education*, ed. K. G. Swisher and J. W. Tippeconnic III, 2–30. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Lomawaima, K. T. 2002. American Indian education: By Indians versus for Indians. In *A companion to American Indian history, 1875–1928*. London: Wiley Blackwell.

Luiselli, V. 2020. *Lost Children Archive*. London: Vintage.

Martin, L. L. 2012. ‘Catch and remove’: Detention, deterrence, and discipline in US noncitizen family detention practice. *Geopolitics* 17 (2):312–34. doi:10.1080/14650045.2011.554463.

Mbembé, A. 2003. Necropolitics. *Public Culture* 15 (1):11–40. doi:10.1215/08992363-15-1-11.

Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the postcolony*. Vol. 41. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mbembe, A. 2017. *Critique of black reason*. Durham: Duke University Press.

McWhorter, L. 2009. *Racism and sexual oppression in Anglo-America: A genealogy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Medien, K. 2018. *Intimate occupation: Sexual biopolitics in colonized Palestine*. Coventry: University of Warwick.

Medien, K., and J. K. Puar. 2018. Thinking life, death, and solidarity through colonized Palestine: An interview with Jasbir K. Puar. *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 14 (1):94–103. doi:10.1215/15525864-4297141.

Medovoi, L. 2012. Dogma-Line RacismIslamophobia and the Second Axis of Race. *Social Text* 30 (2):43–74. doi:10.1215/01642472-1541754.

Merrick, R. 2020. “Tories vote down plan to help reunite unaccompanied child refugees with UK families.” *The Independent*, January 8, 2020. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/child-refugee-vote-brexit-bill-withdrawal-agreement-labour-boris-johnson-a9275391.html

Mies, M. 2014. *Patriarchy and accumulation on a world scale: Women in the international division of labour*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Montoya-Galvez, C. 2021. “U.S. extends migrant expulsion policy, citing Delta variant and surge in border crossings.” *CBS NEWS*, August 3, 2021. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/immigration-border-crossing-migrant-expulsion-policy-covid-delta-variant/

Morgensen, S. L. 2011. The biopolitics of settler colonialism: Right here, right now. *Settler Colonial Studies* 1 (1):52–76. doi:10.1080/2201473X.2011.10648801.

Morgensen, S. L. 2012. Theorising gender, sexuality and settler colonialism: An introduction. *Settler Colonial Studies* 2 (2):2–22. doi:10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648839.

Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). 2018. NAISA council statement on “zero tolerance” and family separation in the United States, July 20, 2018.

NCSL. 2021. Disproportionality and race equity in child welfare national conference of state legislatures. https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/disproportionality-and-race-equity-in-child-welfare.aspx.

Osuri, G. 2017. Imperialism, colonialism and sovereignty in the (post) colony: India and Kashmir. *Third World Quarterly* 38 (11):2428–43. doi:10.1080/01436597.2017.1354695.

Patterson, O. 2018. *Slavery and social death: A comparative study with a new preface*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Povinelli, E. 2011. *Economies of abandonment: Social belonging and endurance in late liberalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Puar, J. K. 2007. *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Puar, J. K. 2017. *The right to maim: Debility, capacity, disability*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Röpke, W. 1969. *Against the tide*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
Saldaña-Portillo, M. J. 2019. The violence of citizenship in the making of refugees: The United States and Central America. *Social Text* 37 (4):1–21. doi:10.1215/01642472-7794343.
Schuller, K. 2018. *The biopolitics of feeling: Race, sex, and science in the nineteenth century*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Shalhoub-Kevorkian, N. 2019. *Incarcerated childhood and the politics of unchilding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Sherman, C., M. Mendoza, and G. Burke. 2019. "US held record number of migrant children in custody in 2019." *AP News*, November 12, 2019. https://apnews.com/015702afdb4d4fbf85cf5070cd2c6824
Simpson, L. B. 2017. *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Smith, S., P. Vasudevan, C. Serrano, and G. Banu. 2019. Breaking families: Whiteness, state violence, and the alienable rights of kin. *Political Geography* 72:144–46. doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.01.001.
Solomos, J., B. Findlay, S. Jones, and P. Gilroy. 1982. *The empire strikes back*. London: Hutchinson.
Speed, S. 2020. The persistence of White supremacy: Indigenous women migrants and the structures of settler capitalism. *American Anthropologist* 122 (1):76–85. doi:10.1111/aman.13359.
Spivak, G. 1985. Scattered speculations on the question of value. *Diacritics* 15 (4):73–93.
Stoler, A. L. 1995. Race and the education of desire: Foucault's." In *History of sexuality and the colonial order of things*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Stoler, A. L. 2010. *Carnal knowledge and imperial power: Race and the intimate in colonial rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Tamez, M. 2016. Necropolitics, Carlise Indian School, and Ndé memory. In *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous histories, memories, and reclamations*, ed. J. Fear-Segal and S. D. Rose. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Thatcher, M. 1987. Interview for *Woman's Own* ("no such thing as society"). Margaret Thatcher Foundation. Thatcher Archive (THCR 5/2/262): COI transcript. https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106689
Torres, R. M. 2018. A crisis of rights and responsibility: Feminist geopolitical perspectives on Latin American refugees and migrants. *Gender, Place & Culture* 25 (1):13–36. doi:10.1080/0966369X.2017.1414036.
Tuck, E. 2009. Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review* 79 (3):409–28. doi:10.17763/haer.79.3.n0016675661t3n15.
Turner, J. 2020. *Bordering intimacy: Postcolonial governance and the policing of family*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Tyler, I. 2013. *Revolting subjects: Social abjection and resistance in neoliberal Britain*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
Tyler, I. 2018. The hieroglyphics of the border: Racial stigma in neoliberal Europe. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41 (10):1783–801. doi:10.1080/01419870.2017.1361542.
Valverde, M. 2007. Genealogies of European states: Foucauldian reflections. *Economy and Society* 36 (1):159–78. doi:10.1080/03085140601089911.
Valverde, M. 2008. *The age of light, soap, and water: Moral reform in English Canada, 1885–1925*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Weheliye, A. G. 2014. *Habeas viscus: Racializing assemblages, biopolitics, and Black feminist theories of the human*.
Weinbaum, A. E. 2004. *Wayward reproductions: Genealogies of race and nation in transatlantic modern thought*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Whyte, J. 2019. *The morals of the market: Human rights and the rise of neoliberalism*. London: Verso Books.
Wilson, K. 2013. *Race, racism and development: Interrogating history, discourse and practice*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
Wolfe, P. 2006. Settler Colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (4):387–409. doi:10.1080/14623520601056240.
Wood, L. C. N. 2018. Impact of punitive immigration policies, parent-child separation and child detention on the mental health and development of children. *BMJ Paediatrics Open* 2 (1):1. doi:10.1136/bmjpo-2018-000338.

Woodcock, A., and A. Cowburn. 2020. “Brexit: Boris Johnson suffers new Lords defeat over bid to scrap protections for child refugees.” *The Independent*, January 21, 2020. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-vote-refugees-dubs-amendment-house-lords-peers-child-migrants-a9294961.html.

Wynter, S. 1989. Beyond the word of man: Glissant and the new discourse of the antilles. *World Literature Today* 63 (4):637–48. doi:10.2307/40145557.

Wynter, S. 1995. The Pope must have been drunk, the King of Castile a madman: Culture as actuality, and the Caribbean rethinking modernity. In *The reordering of culture: Latin America, the Caribbean and Canada in the hood*, ed. A. Ruprecht and C. Taiana, 17–41. Montreal: Carleton University Press.

Wynter, S. 2003. Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its over-representation: An argument. *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3 (3):257–337. doi:10.1353/ncr.2004.0015.

CLAIRE BLENCOWE is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK. E-mail: c.blencowe@warwick.ac.uk. She is currently working on a monograph for Manchester University Press entitled *Spirits of Extraction: Religion, Colonialism and Neoliberal Authoritarianism* and participating in a research project on contesting atmospheres of authority in Rio. She specializes in social and cultural theory and often serves as co-Director of the Social Theory Centre at Warwick.